

REMARKS

Allowability of claims 34-42, subject to correction of bases for rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶ 2, is noted with appreciation.

Specifically, claims 34 and 42 have each been amended at line 3 to recite the singular "procedure."

In addition, claim 34 has been amended at step (d) in consideration of the Examiner's suggestions to recite "for dilating issue along the passage."

And, claim 36 has been amended at line 4 in consideration of the Examiner's suggestion to obviate the lack of antecedent basis as the basis for rejection of this claim.

However, claims 37 and 41 have been rejected for depending from and including limitations recited in prior claims, and this rejection is respectfully traversed.

It should be noted that claim 37 depends from claim 35 that concludes with recitation of "leaving the expandable sheath positioned in the passage," and that claim 37 then recites, *inter alia*, the additional limitation of "inserting into a proximate end of the expandable sheath *positioned within the passage* an endoscopic cannula for performing a cardiac procedure."

Similarly, claim 41 depends from claim 36 (which depends from claim 34) that recites "additionally dilating...responsive to insertion into the expandable sheath *positioned within the passage* a surgical tool having lateral dimensions,"

and that dependant claim 41 additionally recites "the surgical tool includes an endoscopic cannula."

There is thus no overlap of limitations previously recited between and among parent and child claims in these respective claims or branches of claim dependencies, and it is therefore respectfully submitted that claims 37 and 41, along with claims 34-36 and 42, are now patentable to Applicant.

Reconsideration and favorable action are solicited.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney for the Applicant regarding any remaining issue that may expedite favorable disposition of this application.

Respectfully submitted,
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